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School District Restructuring: An Evaluation Process to Determine Effectiveness

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SCHOOL DISTRICT RESTRUCTURING: AN EVALUATION PROCESS TO DETERMINE EFFECTIVENESS

Much has been written concerning the need for schools to restructure. In scores of books and journals on school restructuring, suggestions have centered around such concepts as: decentralization, school-based management, and collaborative decision-making. Although these models have been utilized over a number of years, there is limited evidence relating to their effectiveness. Almost no research studies have concluded that such restructuring models have impacted the academic lives of students. The purpose of this article is to describe a program evaluation process utilized in conducting a study of school restructuring in a mid-sized, urban school district. The strategies used, results obtained, and the applicability to other districts are discussed.

A new superintendent took over the leadership of a midwestern, urban school district. He established an organizational structure that deviated from the previous one by flattening the operational hierarchy in order to have decisions made by staff who work closely with their primary customers—the students. This new structure reduced administrative and support layers between the central office policy regulators/resource dispensers and the building staff. Its purpose was also to promote shared decision-making processes among staff, with the belief that the more decisions are made at the building level, the more likely such decisions would impact student learning in positive ways.

During his first year in the superintendency, he restructured the schools in the following ways:

1. Eliminated approximately 20 central office positions, including the deputy and assistant superintendent.
2. Eliminated approximately 10 secretarial positions.
3. Eliminated approximately 10 assistant principalships.
4. Consolidated central office staff positions or redistributed tasks to local building administrators.
5. Divided the district into three area clusters, led by lead principals, each supervising approximately 17 buildings.
6. Provided control of building operations to the principal, i.e., teachers, custodians, security personnel, food service workers, counselors.
7. Reconceptualized the district organizational chart reflecting a flatter organization.
8. Reconstructed membership in the superintendent's cabinet.

In December 1991, the superintendent approached the researchers to discuss the possibility of studying the effects of his restructuring upon the operation of the district. After considerable background discussion, the superintendent's major objectives were categorized into four areas:

1. To maximize the delivery of services to students.
 - To allocate the physical and human resources needed by students at the building level.
 - To decentralize decision-making from the district to the building level.
2. To downsize the district's organizational structure: "Doing More With Less."
 - To institute a "top-down" change process to foster a "bottom-up" decision process.
3. To form a post-bureaucratic organizational structure.
 - To consciously promote the following concepts within the school district: external and internal alliances, employee entrepreneurship, organizational culture, and team-oriented development.
4. To modify the management styles and the concomitant delivery systems within the school district.
 - To identify and develop new leadership roles and functions.

The purpose of this study was to provide information to the superintendent on progress the district was making in achieving the above stated goals. The intent of the data collection was to identify how and why various structural elements were operating so that modifications could be adopted where necessary. The research questions guiding the study were both product and process oriented:

1. What are the characteristics of this organizational restructuring; the forms they assume and the variations they display?
2. What are the consequences or outcomes of the organizational restructuring; the forms they assume and the variations they display?

Literature Review: The Need for New School Structures

Mitchell and Beach (1993) noted that in the early 1990s schools, as well as most government-run public services, were being challenged to prove that their productivity justified the enormous public investment. With an economy changing from manufacturing to information and service, the business world was forced to consider alternative structures. These public investment and productivity concerns spilled over into school organizations as well.

Although the term restructuring is the most visible concept in the school improvement debate, Mitchell and Beach (1993) conclude that there is little, if any, consensus on what the term means. The American Association of School Administrators (AASA) characterizes restructuring as decentralizing authority from the central office to the building site (AASA, 1988). Tyack (1990) (cited by Mitchell & Beach, 1993) identifies six main themes of restructuring—three themes are organizational issues: school site, teachers, and governance; while the other themes are operational issues: parental/

student choice, pedagogical strategies, and the mix of school services provided.

The most widely discussed approach to school restructuring centers on school-based management. Mitchell and Beach (1993) conclude that the current manner of implementing school-based approaches comes to mean the strengthening of the principal's role and function. School-based management may be a viable avenue for school improvement, they claim, because of the flexibility it accords schools. However, it does not appear to be the key stimulus for innovation. For a number of analysts, the motive for expanding school-based decision-making authority is linked to expanding teacher, rather than principal, influence over school operations.

A second restructuring goal, cited by the same authors, centers on the role of the teacher. Proposals for restructuring schools urge some combination of expanding power (empowerment), transforming attitudes (professionalism), and increasing skills which include transforming labor relations (Mitchell & Beach, 1993). Studies have confirmed that effective organizations exist where staff members, not just administrators, engage in the planning process (Berman & McLaughlin, 1980; Fullan, 1991; Levine & Stark, 1981; Miller, 1980; Naisbett, 1982; Purkey & Smith, 1982).

The third theme of restructuring centers around "choice" (Chubb & Moe, 1990). This theme centers on how schools operate, rather than who controls them. Chubb and Moe (1990) state that "Of all the sundry reforms that attract attention, only choice has the capacity to address these (education) problems" (p. 216). Related to this theme, Mitchell and Beach (1993) believe a more widely practiced strategy is the magnet-school. School clients are given a choice of school programs rather than merely a choice among schools.

The fourth theme of restructuring centers on pedagogical methods; it is one of the most confused themes in the reform debate (Mitchell & Beach, 1993). While they believe that there is a consensus that the reform movement is directed toward increased educational effectiveness, specific proposals for reorienting teaching activities and curriculum content are so varied that it is difficult to relate specific changes to specific outcomes.

The final theme identified by Mitchell and Beach (1993) is the most controversial. This theme focuses upon changing the basic mission of the school and redefining the services to be provided. One of the proposals they identify would have schools be the lead institution in a system of "integrated children's services" linking the services of juvenile justice, child welfare, parks and recreation, libraries, public health, and education.

In a decade where restructuring is the norm, Lewis's (1989) admonition that the challenge of leadership is to avoid past mistakes seems appropriate, especially to superintendents engaged in change. Restructuring requires development, and the development process requires time, accommodation, and tolerance for mistakes.

Anderson (1993) has created a six stage change model: (a) maintenance of the old system, (b) awareness, (c) exploration, (d) transition, (e) emergence of a new infrastructure, and (d) predominance of the new system. In the "maintenance of the old system" stage, the administrative role and responsibilities are seen as diminishing conflict, emphasizing standardization and rules, and providing information and top-down decision-making. The "awareness" stage has administrators recognizing the need to change roles, discussing new responsibilities, and directing media attention to innovative leaders. The "exploration" stage includes pilot testing school-based decision-making, providing professional development, and allocating needed resources. During the "transition" stage, administrators design methods to distribute decision-making, emphasize flexibility in the outcomes to be achieved, and allocate needed resources for ongoing teacher professional development. With the "emergence of the new infrastructure," administrators are hired using new criteria; school-based decision-making becomes the norm, school-community councils are implemented, and teachers have responsibility for instructional decisions. Finally, when the "new system" stage is in place, administrators encourage rethinking, improvement, and innovation among staff. At this point in the process, administrators allocate needed resources to support student learning and school-based management.

Administrators would do well to understand what Mutchler (1990) identifies as barriers to teacher and principal behavioral change. Among such barriers are fear of taking risks, lack of trust, fear of losing power, and lack of skills. She makes the point that the school district is interdependent, i.e., change at one level affects all other levels. Thus, when change is occurring, educational leaders must consider four critical variables: (a) the structure of the organization, (b) the new tasks to be performed, (c) the technology needed, and (d) the staff development needs of the employees. Any change in one of the variables will have a profound affect on the other three, and provisions must be made to address these variables and their influence on the change being initiated.

Those responsible for implementing school-based plans are Principals. Principals as a group seem to be supportive of restructuring (Hallinger, Murphy, & Hausman, 1992). While this study demonstrates evidence of principal support for reform, it also identifies variables predictive of difficulties associated with restructuring. Aside from the predictable structural, cultural, and political impediments to reform, principals may be severely limited by their own experience, training, and beliefs in bringing about a new order of schools.

Finally, who is this "new" superintendent who leads a restructured district? What characterizes the role? One thing is certain: the "restructured" superintendent in a decentralized organization is not free from accountability. If anything, accountability demands have increased in the past decade. Effective schools are defined as those with improved outcomes. Staffs are

held accountable for results (Cohen, 1981; Drucker, 1982; McMahon, 1972; Miles, 1980; Rowe, 1981), and the administrator ultimately accountable is still the superintendent.

Methods

Both qualitative and quantitative techniques were employed as data collection began in January 1992; however, the emphasis (appropriate for exploratory purposes) was on qualitative strategies. Three research strategies (observations of cabinet meetings, interviews of administrators, and leadership profile analyses) were used.

This study is not "research" in a tightly controlled sense. Four reasons rendered the study an *evaluation research* study. First, Rippey's (1973) concept of "transactional evaluation" guided the planning because the impetus at the outset was two-fold: to identify variables related to organizational effectiveness; and to gather formative evaluation data for district use in modifying administrative practice. Rippey describes such evaluation as conducted "to draw attention to the effects of disruptions in an organization on incumbents in the roles in the system undergoing change...rather than with the outcomes of the system's activity" (p. 13). Transactional evaluation is, therefore, a strategy for managing dysfunctions that occur within an organization in the midst of major organizational change.

Second, along with the transactional nature of this research focus, the project assumed qualities of what Stake calls "responsive evaluation" (Shadish, Cook, & Leviton, 1991). For example, the study design emerges from the responses of administrators and is complicated by multiple perspectives.

Third, there were immediate policy implications. This research dealt with policy issues that were in play at the time of data collection. The school organization was in the throes of change while it was being studied.

Fourth, not only was the intent to assess the status of this change process, but to provide information to the superintendent that would be helpful in altering the implementation of both policy and school structure. Similar to the position of Hess, Flinspach, and Ryan (1993), who studied Chicago school reform, "the report was not intended to simply catalogue...the report was intended to critique the plans and to instigate change in the very process that we were studying" (p. 45).

The design of this study was both an emergent one and one that moved from the general to the specific (See Table 1). The first six months of the study (January through June, 1992) included a holistic view of the district operation in the context of a newly appointed leader and a new operational structure. The second half of the study (September 1992 through May 1993) was conducted to focus on collecting data concerning local issues derived from the first phase of the research. The design was emergent in the sense

that an openness to the issues which surfaced was maintained while the first exploratory stages of the study were conducted.

Table 1

Data Collection Strategy

Specific data for research questions	Interviews	Cabinet meeting observations	Leadership style analysis
<i>Question #1. The characteristics of organizational restructuring</i>			
1. Identify how the district structure operates	X		
2. Identify the vision driving the district operation	X	X	
<i>Question #2. The consequences of organizational restructuring</i>			
1. Describe new roles/functions	X	X	X
2. Describe leader-follower synchrony; style, flexibility, ability to diagnose organiza- tional problems			X
3. Assess communication process and product	X	X	X

Cabinet Meeting Observations

Cabinet meetings conducted by the superintendent were observed from January through June, 1992. Cabinet meetings typically were attended by the superintendent and his central office middle managers. Of the 24 cabinet meetings, 5 were "all-district administrator" meetings of over 200 administrators which were not observed. Of the remaining 19 cabinet meetings, 11 were observed and recorded. All raw data in the form of meeting notes were bound under separate cover for reference by the superintendent. The cabinet meeting date, starting time, and the observer's name were recorded for each meeting. Interpretation of observations was aimed at uncovering

patterns of communication, leadership strategies, interpersonal relationships, group dynamics, and evidence of consensus concerning the direction of the district.

Interviews

Beginning in January 1992, 26 ethnographic interviews were conducted. Including the superintendent, 9 out of 18 cabinet members were randomly selected; 16 out of 48 building principals were selected at random and stratified across the three clusters. Interview questions were semi-structured and designed to elicit broad perceptions of the organizational changes in the district. Scheduled questions were utilized in each interview, but respondents were encouraged to go beyond the specifics and elaborate on their own perceptions in whatever direction they chose. The intent was to identify administrator feelings, opinions, and understandings about the superintendent's vision and direction for the school district.

Each of two researchers took part in interviewing half the respondents. Because the new position of lead principal was an important element of the new structure, both researchers interviewed each lead principal. Each interview took place in the office of the administrator and lasted approximately one hour. Notes were made during the interviews and were typed later for analysis. Researcher interview notes were bound under separate cover for archival purposes.

Leadership Profiles

Profiles of leadership style of both central office staff (members of the superintendent's cabinet) and building principals were derived through the use of the LEAD (Hersey & Blanchard, 1993) and the Leadership Behavioral Analysis II (LBAll) (Blanchard, Hamilton, & Zigarmi, 1987) profile instruments. The LEAD contains descriptions of 20 general organizational scenarios to which respondents select an option they feel an effective leader would choose. This instrument was used to assess the leadership style of central office personnel. The LBAll is similar and contains 12 items describing educational scenarios. This instrument was used with both building and lead principals. Both instruments are measures theoretically based on the concept of situational leadership (Hersey & Blanchard, 1993). Each instrument uses two forms: one form requests the leader to select their decisions to hypothetical situations; a second form asks subordinates to select the option that most closely reflects what they think their leader would decide. Individual administrator profiles were created from the results of the instruments that allowed each leader to address questions about themselves:

1. Do I see myself as others see me?
In other words, do those who report to me perceive me as using the same leadership style(s) that I see myself using?
2. Am I flexible?
In other words, do I tend to use more than one leadership style to get things done?
3. Do I manage people differently?
In other words, do my subordinates see my primary style differently?
4. Do I diagnose well?
In other words, am I effective in matching my choice of leadership style to the needs of the situation?

Leadership profile instruments were distributed by mail. Central office staff (N=6; including the superintendent and five members of the cabinet) were mailed the "LEAD self" instrument while subordinate staff members who reported to these cabinet members were mailed the "LEAD other." Depending on the number of persons reporting to a leader, three to six subordinates were randomly selected for each.

Building and lead principals were mailed the LBAII instrument. For each lead principal, eight building level principals were randomly selected to assess lead principal behavior. Building principals were mailed the LBAII instrument, and eight teachers per building were randomly selected to complete the "subordinate's" version of the instrument. Instruments were mailed to all building principals (N=48) and eight teachers per principal (N=384).

Results

Results of Cabinet Meeting Observations

In observing six months of cabinet meetings, the researchers recorded their interpretations about the following superintendent behaviors: (a) relationship between task-oriented versus relationship-oriented behavior, (b) pace and style of meetings, (c) effectiveness in communicating vision, and (d) how that vision linked the new organizational structure to roles within it.

Several themes recurred during the analysis of the field notes: That his cabinet respected, liked, and enjoyed their work with this superintendent was convincing. The superintendent consistently called for ideas and feedback from cabinet members in a strongly affective and energetic style. Meetings were used to reinforce his vision for the district. He successfully repeated the need for decentralizing the decisions in the district to the school building site. The laser-beam focus of the superintendent always seemed on the students. This vigorous focus seemed to help strengthen the resolve of the cabinet members to make the new structure work. Cabinet meetings seemed, on the other hand, to be too lengthy, too detailed, both of which led to some

responsibility miscuing. Loss of direction and loss of concentration on the tasks at-hand became apparent.

The indistinct role of the lead principal continued to surface as it had throughout the study. While these individuals were the line officers reporting to the superintendent, each lead principal assumed additional duties from time to time during the school year which seemed to confuse other administrators about their responsibilities to the organization. Perhaps because he moved to the superintendency from a previous role as deputy superintendent, there was some evidence that he was attempting to play both roles, resulting in group dynamics becoming mired in wasteful detail.

Results of Interviews

Three themes surfaced in the interviews of 26 central office and building administrators, and all related to the roles of the superintendent, the lead principals, and the central office staff. In the first theme, most administrators who were interviewed expressed a strong desire that the new superintendent succeed. His credibility was strong enough to "bank on," at least for a time. Given his prior role as deputy superintendent, he was a known quantity to those interviewed. This was not entirely an advantage, however, as some felt his previous role and style of leadership might persist, overshadowing his new role. There was, however, a clear understanding and commitment to the superintendent's vision for the district.

The second theme related to the creation of three new positions, defined as "area superintendents," who were lead principals responsible for a number of K-12 school buildings. These positions and corresponding role descriptions were perceived with confusion by almost everyone. It was unclear where these positions fit within the organizational structure; miscommunication and responsibility overlap were often cited as examples of this ill-defined position. There was a sense that these positions were high in responsibility and low in authority. The results were not surprising to the researchers given that the position was evolving even during the time of the study. A need for role clarification was evident by most personnel throughout the organization.

Finally, central office dynamics made up the third pattern of responses. While the operational goal of a flattened hierarchy was clear to those interviewed, there was consensus that top-down decision-making still characterized central office operations. The indistinct interface of the lead principals with the central office seemed problematic: (a) no network of communication had developed, (b) service providers were slow to respond, and (c) efficiency was lacking. Communication skills and human relations skills emerged as areas where attention was needed.

Because structural changes were new and had not been solidified across the district, these findings were not completely unexpected. The patterns emerging from the interviews were consistent and strong, adding dependability¹ to our

conclusions. In fact, the evidence helped to suggest ways to ameliorate specific weaknesses in the implementation of this restructured district.

Leadership Profiles

Returned leadership instruments were sufficient to develop profiles of all six cabinet members studied (100% return), each lead principal (100% return), and 32 of the 48 building principals (66% return). As noted in the research methods section, it was necessary to consider the leaders' self assessment along with a set of assessments from his/her followers. While eight teachers were asked to assess the leader's style in each building, a minimum of at least six returned instruments from teachers, along with the principal's self-assessment, which was sufficient to develop that principal's profile. The response rate was within the scoring boundaries set by Blanchard Training & Associates. Follow-up letters and phone calls were made to encourage the return of instruments.

When analyzing the leadership styles of the building principals, there were 6 of the 32 who had left the principalship in June; thus these individuals were deleted from the report. A resulting 26 principal profiles are included in this study.

Administrators in leadership positions perceived themselves as either an S2 Style or an S3 Style. Sixteen (61.5%) of the building principals saw themselves in quadrant S2, defined as a "coaching" style with both *high* levels of directiveness (tells the followers what to do) and *high* levels of support for followers. The remaining 10 principals (38.4%) perceived themselves as leaders who had high levels of supportiveness and low levels of directiveness, defined as a "supporting" style, S3.

For the building principals, the followers of only 6 of the 16 self-defined "coaches" perceived them as practicing "coaching" styles. In other words, in the case of 6 of the 26 buildings, the principal and the teachers agreed that the primary leadership style of that principal was one of "coaching." The followers of another eight of the "coaching" principals perceived that the primary style of their principals was in quadrant S1—high levels of directiveness and low levels of support, what Blanchard calls a "directing" style of leadership. He further describes this style as "Leader provides specific instructions (rules and goals) for followers and closely supervises task accomplishment." Of the remaining two, one perceived the "coaching" principal as S3, or one with a "supporting" style; and the other perceived the principal as an S4, a "delegating style," described by Blanchard as "Leader turns over decisions and responsibility for implementation to followers."

In the other group of ten principals, seven of these individuals (70%) had followers who perceived them as S2, "coaches." The followers of two principals perceived them as primarily an S1 leadership style, "directing";

and one principal was perceived by followers as an S3, having primarily a "supporting" style.

The primary, self-assessed, leadership style of four cabinet members was S2, "coaching." The remaining two cabinet members categorized themselves as "supporting," S3. Only one cabinet member perceived himself as his followers did: high directiveness and high supportiveness. The other cabinet members (5) differed from their followers in how they perceived their primary leadership style.

Two of the lead principals perceived their primary style as S2, "coaching." The followers for two lead principals perceived them as S3, "supporting"; the third lead principal's self perception was as a "supporting" style, while followers perceived a "coaching" style.

Of four possible styles of leadership (coaching, supporting, directing, and delegating), there was almost no evidence of "directing" and "delegating" among the administrators' self assessments. Instead, they saw themselves as "coaching" and "supporting" types of leaders. Both these styles characteristically take their followers into consideration when making decisions. However, their teachers did not always see them this way. There were discrepancies between the principals' and teachers' perceptions of "leadership styles" (See Table 2).

Table 2

Four Leadership Styles

Directing (S1)	High directive/Low supportive behavior: Leader provides specific instruction (roles and goals) for follower(s) and closely supervises task accomplishment
Coaching (S2)	High directive/High supportive behavior: Leader explains decisions and solicits suggestions from follower(s) but continues to direct task accomplishment
Supporting (S3)	High supportive/Low directive behavior: Leader makes decisions together with the follower(s) and supports efforts toward task accomplishment
Delegating (S4)	Low supportive/Low directive behavior: Leader turns over decisions and responsibility for implementation to follower(s)

Note. (Hersey & Blanchard, 1993)

Discussion: The Applicability of This Evaluation Model

Six months into the study, two of the researchers met with the superintendent and presented him with both an oral and a written report of the study. The written report consisted of summaries of the data collected. The oral report expanded to include a discussion of alternatives to ameliorate problems the data revealed. Summaries of the interviews were collapsed into one section of the report; a summary of the cabinet observations became a second section; and the leadership style assessments were also reported in summary form. Each leadership profile description and summary was sent to each participating administrator in the district.

Having reported to the superintendent, one may ask how the results helped the district in this restructuring effort. Anderson's (1993) change model helps assess the impact the study had on the process of school restructuring. Clearly, the presence of researchers and the very act of commissioning the study raised the awareness of the administrative staff that the change process would be monitored. The presence of researchers sent the message that change was expected, normal, and to be managed; not to be resisted or feared. The administrators were clearly at Anderson's fourth stage: "transition." The superintendent was at the fifth stage: "emergence of a new infrastructure."

Decisions emanating from our research came from the superintendent. He had a wealth of information with which to make corrections and modify his plan for the next steps. What modifications he made as a result of the study were not always known to the researchers. From what is known, the adjustments to the restructuring ranged from the subtle and the behind-the-scenes, to the more visible and substantive. For instance, he reduced the number of cabinet members who met regularly with him by about half. As middle level administrators took on more responsibility in a more decentralized system, they began to carry out their own discussions with those who worked with them. The superintendent's cabinet was a model for a similar dynamic within departments.

Secondly, the superintendent knew a lot about his building level principals. He could deal with each one in new ways as the decentralization process continued. He used the research findings to begin to think about staff development for the administrative staff as the change process continued.

Thirdly, it is noteworthy that the researchers returned to the district, at the superintendent's request, to collect data in a follow-up study in 1994. The same procedures were used: cabinet meeting observations, interviews of administrators, and leadership profile analyses of new principals who had not been included in the first study. This second study provided feedback to the superintendent, as did the first. As far as impacts of this research are concerned, returning to conduct the second study was no doubt the most

significant. That the first study generated a second study reflected a respect for learning—learning about the realities of restructuring while it is happening.

Change is a process! A process, by definition, that is ongoing. Evaluation of a change process is ongoing as well. Rippey's transactional evaluation and Mitchell and Beach's notion of changing not only structures but attitudes, dictates that ongoing monitoring of what happens during the change process is essential. The fact that the first study solidified that belief in this district was an important outcome.

The purpose of this article was to present a formative program evaluation process that was successfully applied in a mid-sized, urban school district undergoing restructuring. Within the category of Rippey's transactional evaluation, this evaluation model is one suggested for others who are assessing organizational change as it is occurring. Having presented the purposes of the study, the methodology used, and the summary results of those methods, a discussion of the utility of this evaluation model is in order.

This evaluation model is useful because of the multiple perspectives on change that it provides. First, both central office and building level administrators, as well as teachers, provided data. Second, triangulation of data types (both quantitative and qualitative) added depth and meaning to the results. Third, the structural as well as functional components of the organization were investigated as both the ways in which the new structure was working, and the role discrepancies between supervisors and their staffs were pursued. Fourth, the researchers were outsiders and could retain an objectivity in data collection and analysis. As educational administration professors, the researchers were familiar with the experiences of educators creating and adjusting to organizational change. And finally, because the superintendent initiated this study, it was more likely that the results would be used in a serious and productive manner.

In qualitative research, the researcher is the tool of data analysis. Interpretations of the raw data from interviews and observations need to be properly embedded within the cultural context of the organization. Because the researchers were university faculty, they were accustomed to a very different organizational culture: (a) one usually not crisis-driven, as are urban schools, (b) one where time and deliberation are relatively abundant, and (c) one where the theoretical and the speculative are valued because of the time available to engage in them. Because the superintendent asked the research questions, and because preliminary findings were discussed with him before definitive findings were reported, that cultural disparity was lessened. As a matter of fact, the dual organizational perspectives, i.e., insider (superintendent) and outsider (researchers), created a richer set of findings than might have occurred otherwise.

Many staffs and publics are accustomed to new initiatives by new superintendents, and also accustomed to allowing changes to go unmonitored. That this superintendent would invest in evaluating the consequences of

restructuring is positive on the face of it. Thus, a strong advantage of the model is the fact that it can be used to formatively examine restructuring in the early stages of implementation: decisions become data-based early on as restructuring decisions take hold.

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¹ Dependability, according to Lincoln and Guba (1985), parallels the quantitative research characteristic of reliability.

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